

**CLAIMS**

What is claimed is:

- 1     1.    A nail softener for correcting a deformed nail or modifying the structure of a  
2           nail modification, containing at least one reducing agent selected from the  
3           group consisting of cysteine, thioglycolic acid and thioglycolate.
- 1     2.    The nail softener as defined in claim 1, wherein said reducing agent is  
2           thioglycolate.
- 1     3.    The nail softener as defined in claim 2, wherein said reducing agent is  
2           ammonium thioglycolate.
- 1     4.    The nail softener as defined in claim 1, wherein said reducing agent is  
2           subjected to a deodorizing treatment.
- 1     5.    An enclosure for an external chemical, comprising:  
2           an enclosure body receiving said external chemical therein and having  
3           an opening for exposing said external chemical when used;  
4           a sealing film for allowing said external chemical to be sealingly  
5           enclosed in said external chemical;  
6           an adhesive layer provided at the peripheral portion of said opening of  
7           said enclosure body; and  
8           a releasable film releasably attached to said enclosure body by use of  
9           said adhesive layer,  
10          wherein after said releasable film is removed, said adhesive layer  
11          serves as an adhesive portion for allowing said enclosure body to be  
12          attached to a diseased area.
- 1     6.    The enclosure as defined in claim 5, wherein said sealing film is attached to  
2           said enclosure body by use of said adhesive layer so that said releasable  
3           film is served by said sealing film.

- 1     7.    The enclosure as defined in claim 5, wherein said sealing film is adapted to  
2           be broken or pulled out of said enclosure body so as to allow said external  
3           chemical enclosed in said enclosure body to be exposed to the outside  
4           thereof.
- 1     8.    The enclosure as defined in claim 5, wherein said opening has a size equal  
2           to or greater than that of said diseased area.
- 1     9.    The enclosure as defined in claim 5, wherein said enclosure body includes  
2           a ring-shaped pad, and an external-chemical enclosing pocket located on  
3           the top surface of said ring-shaped pad.
- 1     10.   The enclosure as defined in claim 5, wherein said external chemical contains  
2           at least one reducing agent selected from the group consisting of cysteine,  
3           thioglycolic acid and thioglycolate.
- 1     11.   The enclosure as defined in claim 10, wherein said reducing agent is  
2           thioglycolate.
- 1     12.   The enclosure as defined in claim 11, wherein said reducing agent is  
2           ammonium thioglycolate.
- 1     13.   The enclosure as defined in claim 10, wherein said reducing agent is  
2           subjected to a deodorizing treatment.
- 1     14.   The enclosure as defined in claim 5, wherein said external chemical is a  
2           mixture of at least one reducing agent selected from the group consisting of  
3           cysteine, thioglycolic acid and thioglycolate, and a curative drug for said  
4           diseased area.
- 1     15.   The enclosure as defined in claim 5, wherein said external chemical is a  
2           curative drug for said diseased area.

- 1     16. A method of correcting a deformed nail, comprising the steps of:  
2             applying a nail softener containing at least one reducing agent selected  
3             from the group consisting of cysteine, thioglycolic acid and thioglycolate,  
4             onto a diseased area of a toenail;  
5             leaving said diseased area untouched for a given period of time to  
6             soften said nail:  
7             during or after said leaving step, applying a given force onto said nail  
8             to reposition said nail to its normal state; and  
9             immobilizing said nail in said repositioned state for a given period of  
10            time to hold said repositioned state.